

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the subject application. The Non-Final Office Action of August 11, 2003 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

In the Non-Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,359,442) in view of Nakamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,181), Inoue et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,285,435), Hida et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,936,695), and Oshima et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,725,032); allowed claims 10-17; and objected to claims 2-9 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim. This rejection is traversed and reconsideration of the claim is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's allowance of claims 10-17 and the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-9.

The rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al. in view of Nakamura et al., Inoue et al., Hida et al., and Oshima et al. is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 1 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example "an elevator for conveying a liquid crystal display panel having a liquid crystal injection hole from the injecting apparatus to the sealing apparatus; a residual liquid crystal remover for removing contaminated liquid crystal at a periphery of the liquid crystal injection hole; a sealer for sealing the liquid crystal injection hole with a sealant; ..." None of the cited references, singly or in combination, including Tanaka et al., Nakamura et al., Inoue et al., Hida et al., or Oshima et al., teach or suggest at least these features of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 is allowable over the cited references.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner states "Tanaka ...shows that the liquid crystal and the [reservoir] need to be moved vertically relative to each other, but it is not clear that the liquid crystal is raised or lowered."

Applicants respectfully submit, however, Tanaka et al. teaches at column 6, lines 9-16,

“Then, in this evacuated state the liquid crystal retainer 32 and the inlets 20 located at the lower edge of each cell train 12 are brought into contact with each other by raising the holder 26. In this way, the inlets 20 are held and wetted by liquid crystal retained on the liquid crystal retainer 32.”

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the “reservoir” (i.e., the liquid crystal retainer 32) of Tanaka et al. is raised to contact the “liquid crystal” (i.e., the cell train 12) of Tanaka et al.

In continuing with the rejection of claim 1, the Examiner states “Oshima shows that with such systems either the cells or the [reservoir] can be moved (col. 3, lines 30-39), showing that the two were functionally equivalent alternatives. Therefore, it would have been obvious to those of ordinary skill to employ a the liquid crystal cells moved (therefore the conveyor would be an elevator) as opposed to the [reservoir] moved as the two were well known functionally equivalent alternatives, and [therefore] the moving of the cells functions equally well.”

Applicants respectfully submit, however, Oshima et al. teaches at column 3, lines 30-39,

“One of the inner and outer tubular members is rotated or slid relative to the other so as to bring the slots in the respective tubular members in alignment with each other, so that the thread is exposed through the aligned slots, while each of the upper and lower LC supply means is being driven downward or upward so as to bring the thread exposed through the aligned slots in the tubular members into contact with the associated one of the top and bottom LC inlet openings.”

Further, Oshima et al. describes with reference to Figure 3, at column 6, lines 16-23,

“Upper and lower liquid crystal (LC) supply members 6 and 6' are spaced upward and downward from the LC cell 1 at respective positions facing to the top and bottom inlet openings 54 and 56, respectively. Each LC supply member 6 or 6' is connected to an elevator 8 or 8' disposed outside the vacuum chamber 1 for

moving the LC supply member 6 or 6' upward or downward so as to bring it in contact with the inlet opening 54 or 56."

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit column 3, lines 30-39 of Oshima et al. is silent as to any teaching or suggestion that "either the cells or the [reservoir] can be moved," as asserted by the Examiner.

Assuming *arguendo* that Oshima et al. did teach that either the cells or the [reservoir] could be moved or suggest that the cells of Tanaka et al. or the reservoir of Tanaka et al. could be moved, Applicants respectfully submit neither Tanaka et al. nor Oshima et al., nor any of the other cited references, singly or in combination, teach or suggest, for example, "an elevator for conveying a liquid crystal display panel having a liquid crystal injection hole from the injecting apparatus to the sealing apparatus" as set forth in claim 1.

Applicants believe the foregoing remarks place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner deems that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number (202) 496-7500. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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